

From: Terri-A White/R3/USEPA/US
Sent: 4/9/2012 5:38:18 PM

To: "Juan Carlos Rodriguez" <jc.rodriguez@law360.com>
CC: "seneca.roy@epa.gov" <seneca.roy@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: natural gas drilling/water wells report

Juan,
Here's what I can tell you at this point. If I get other points confirmed, I'll send them later.

Q1. How many wells were tested in this report?

A1. The report summarizes data results based on sampling of 31 homes in Dimock.

Q2. Where are the wells located?

A2. For privacy reasons, we can not release the specific well locations.

Q3. Were dangerous levels of contamination found in any of the wells from this round of testing?

A3. EPA found no levels that present a health concern based on risk assessments performed by EPA toxicologists. In performing risk assessments, the toxicologists consider chronic (long term) as well as acute (ie. immediate) conditions.

Q4. Was any contamination found at all, and if so, what was it? (I am looking at the paragraph of the AP story that says "Three of the newly tested wells showed methane while one showed barium well above the EPA's maximum level, but a treatment system installed in the well is removing the substance, an EPA spokesman said.")

A4. Here is a little more information about what the second set of findings indicated. It should be noted that the first set of findings was for 11 home wells sampled during EPA's first week of sampling; the second set of sampling results released last week is for 20 additional homes.

*** One of the 20 wells sampled had levels of sodium above EPA's recommended concentration of sodium in drinking water of between 30,000 and 60,000 micrograms per cubic liter (ug/l). At this well, the residents are currently receiving alternate sources of drinking water from Cabot.**

*** Eight of the 20 wells sampled had levels of sodium above EPA's guidance of 20,000 ug/l for individuals with a restricted sodium intake of 500 mg/day.**

*** Three of the 20 homes had levels of methane above the federal Office of Surface Mining's screening level of 28 parts per million. One of these homes is currently receiving alternate sources of drinking water from Cabot. EPA has notified the two residences where the water was being used in the home and the residents indicated they were already aware that their water contained levels of methane.**

*** One of the 20 homes had levels of barium in the drinking water well above EPA's Maximum Contaminant Level of 2,000 ug/l. The resident was already aware of the higher levels of barium and has a reverse osmosis treatment system installed that is successfully removing barium from the water.**

Q5. How many homes is the EPA still providing drinking water to where prior tests showed contamination? And what the contamination in those homes' water?

A5. EPA continues to provide alternate water to four homes. EPA's current sampling report (data for 31 homes) includes results from three of the four homes. EPA will continue to provide water to these homes while we perform additional sampling to ensure that the drinking water quality at these homes remains consistent and acceptable for use over time.

Q6. Were the test results released April 4 part of the first round of testing?

A6. The results released April 4 are the second set of results for 20 homes sampled during the first round. The Agency is not drawing any conclusions with regard to other homes in the area based on the first two sets of sampling.

Q7. Is the first round of testing done? If so, how many well tests were done, total?

A7. EPA has sampled more than 60 private home wells in Dimock, Pa. We are still attempting to sample a few more as part of the first round of sampling.

Q8. Is there any more testing planned? If so, how many more well tests are planned?

A8. (Will get back to you.)

Q9. Is there any type of general comment or statement the EPA wishes to make about the latest results?

A9. EPA is working diligently to be transparent and thorough in our ongoing sampling of drinking water from more than 60 private home wells in Dimock, Pa. EPA made a commitment to provide the residents with data that was based on the best science and to give a clear picture about the quality of drinking water at these homes as soon as possible. Once all of the sample results are complete, we will conduct a comprehensive review to determine if there are any trends or patterns in the data as it relates to home well water quality. Our actions will continue to be based on the best available science and legal authorities.

Q10. Is there anything else you can think of I should mention in the story?

From: Juan Carlos Rodriguez <jc.rodriguez@law360.com>
To: Terri-A White/R3/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 04/09/2012 01:24 PM
Subject: Re: natural gas drilling/water wells report

Hello Ms. White, thanks for sending this information to me. As a layperson, I don't really understand the spreadsheet, so I'm going to ask some probably pretty basic questions about it.

1. How many wells were tested in this report?
2. Where are the wells located?
3. Were dangerous levels of contamination found in any of the wells from this round of testing?
4. Was any contamination found at all, and if so, what was it? (I am looking at the paragraph of the AP story that says "Three of the newly tested wells showed methane while one showed barium well above the EPA's maximum level, but a treatment system installed in the well is removing the substance, an EPA spokesman said.")
5. How many homes is the EPA still providing drinking water to where prior tests showed contamination? And what the contamination in those homes' water?
6. Were the test results released April 4 part of the first round of testing?
7. Is the first round of testing done? If so, how many well tests were done, total?
8. Is there any more testing planned? If so, how many more well tests are planned?
9. Is there any type of general comment or statement the EPA wishes to make about the latest results?
10. Is there anything else you can think of I should mention in the story?

Thank you very much,
Juan Carlos

On Mon, Apr 9, 2012 at 11:56 AM, Terri-A White <White.Terri-A@epamail.epa.gov> wrote:
Hi Juan,

I just listened to your vm; didn't realize you had sent an email too. Here is EPA's latest statement and info on home well sampling in Dimock, PA. -- Terri

EPA has completed and shared with residents and Pennsylvania state officials the second set of sampling at 20 private drinking water wells in Dimock, Pennsylvania. This set of sampling did not show levels of contaminants that would give EPA reason to take immediate action. EPA remains committed to providing Dimock residents with the best available data and information on the quality of drinking water as expeditiously as possible.

For more information on the sampling results, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/states/pa.html>

From: Juan Carlos Rodriguez <jc.rodriguez@law360.com>
To: Terri-A White/R3/USEPA/US@EPA, Larry Jackson/DC/USEPA/US@EPA, Terri White/R4/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 04/09/2012 10:48 AM
Subject: natural gas drilling/water wells report

Hey, I was wondering if would be possible to get this stuff today please?

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Juan Carlos Rodriguez** <jc.rodriguez@law360.com>

Date: Fri, Apr 6, 2012 at 4:36 PM

Subject: natural gas drilling/water wells report

To: white.terri-a@epa.gov

Hello, my name is Juan Carlos Rodriguez and I'm a reporter at Law360. I'm trying to match the AP story below, so I'd like to get my hands on the report that is mentioned so I can write my own article. Sorry for the late in the day nature of this email, but I just saw the story. If you can let me know about getting the report, I'd sure appreciate it.

Thanks,

Juan Carlos

AP story:

Testing at 20 more water wells in a northeastern Pennsylvania community at the center of a debate over the safety of natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale shows no dangerous levels of contamination, according to a report issued Friday by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The EPA had already tested 11 wells in Dimock, showing the presence of sodium, methane, chromium or bacteria in six of the wells before the results of the latest round of testing.

Three of the newly tested wells showed methane while one showed barium well above the EPA's maximum level, but a treatment system installed in the well is removing the substance, an EPA spokesman said.

Featured in the documentary "Gasland," the Susquehanna County village of Dimock has been at the center of a fierce debate over drilling, in particular the process of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. The process involves injecting a mixture of water and chemicals deep under ground to free trapped natural gas so it can be brought to the surface.

State environmental regulators previously determined that Houston-based Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. contaminated the aquifer underneath homes along Carter Road in Dimock with explosive levels of methane gas, although they later determined the company had met its obligation to provide safe drinking water to residents.

The EPA is still providing drinking water to three homes where prior tests showed contamination. A second round of test is under way, regulators said.

A group of Dimock residents suing Cabot assert their water is also polluted with drilling chemicals, while others say that the water is clean and the plaintiffs are exaggerating problems with their wells to help their lawsuit.

A Cabot spokesman did not immediately return an email seeking comment on the EPA's findings.

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Juan Carlos Rodriguez

Reporter

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